

Qualitative Case Review

Northern Region

Fiscal Year 2005

Preliminary Results

Office of Services Review

June 2005

Executive Summary

- 24 cases were reviewed for the Northern Region Qualitative Case Review conducted in April 2005.
- **For the fourth consecutive year, the overall Child Status score exceeded 95%, with all but one case reaching an acceptable level. This exceeds the exit requirement of 85%.**
- Health/Physical Well-being, Caregiver Functioning, and Satisfaction all reached 100%. There were double digit increases in two Child Status indicators: Stability increased from 75% to 92% and Family Resourcefulness increased from 56% to 77%. Prospects for Permanence and Learning Progress each improved slightly (from 67% to 71% and from 75% to 83%, respectively). Safety dipped from 100% to 96% and Emotional/Behavioral Well-being slipped from 79% to 75%. The other Child Status indicators remained at the levels they achieved last year.
- **After jumping from 58% to 79% last year, overall System Performance increased again this year to 83%.**
- **Every System Performance indicator improved since last year.** Increases of more than 20 percentage points were seen in Effective Results (from 71% to 96%), Formal/Informal Supports (from 79% to 96%), and Child and Family Planning Process (from 63% to 79%). There were also double-digit increases in Functional Assessment (from 54% to 67%), Long-term View (from 58% to 71%), Plan Implementation (from 71% to 83%), Tracking and Adaptation (from 71% to 88%) and Successful Transitions (from 73% to 83%).
- There was a significant difference in the results when comparing foster care cases with home-based cases. Home-based cases (91%) out performed foster care cases (77%).
- The percentage of workers with high caseloads dropped from 46% last year to 29% this year. The number of new workers reviewed decreased from four last year to three this year indicating the turnover rate has improved.

Methodology

The Qualitative Case Review was held the week of April 25-29, 2005. Twenty-four open DCFS cases in the Northern Region were selected and scored. The cases were reviewed by certified reviewers from the Child Welfare Policy and Practice Group (CWPPG), the Office of Services Review (OSR), and the Division of Child and Family Services (DCFS), as well as first time reviewers from DCFS and outside stakeholders. The cases were selected by CWPPG based on a sampling matrix assuring that a representative group of children were reviewed. The sample included children in out-of-home care and families receiving home-based services, such as voluntary supervision, protective supervision and intensive family preservation. Cases were selected to include offices throughout the region.

The information was obtained through in-depth interviews with the child (if old enough to participate), his or her parents or other guardians, foster parents (when placed in foster care), caseworker, teacher, therapist, other service providers, and others having a significant role in the child's life. In addition the child's file, including prior CPS investigations and other available records, was reviewed.

Performance Tables

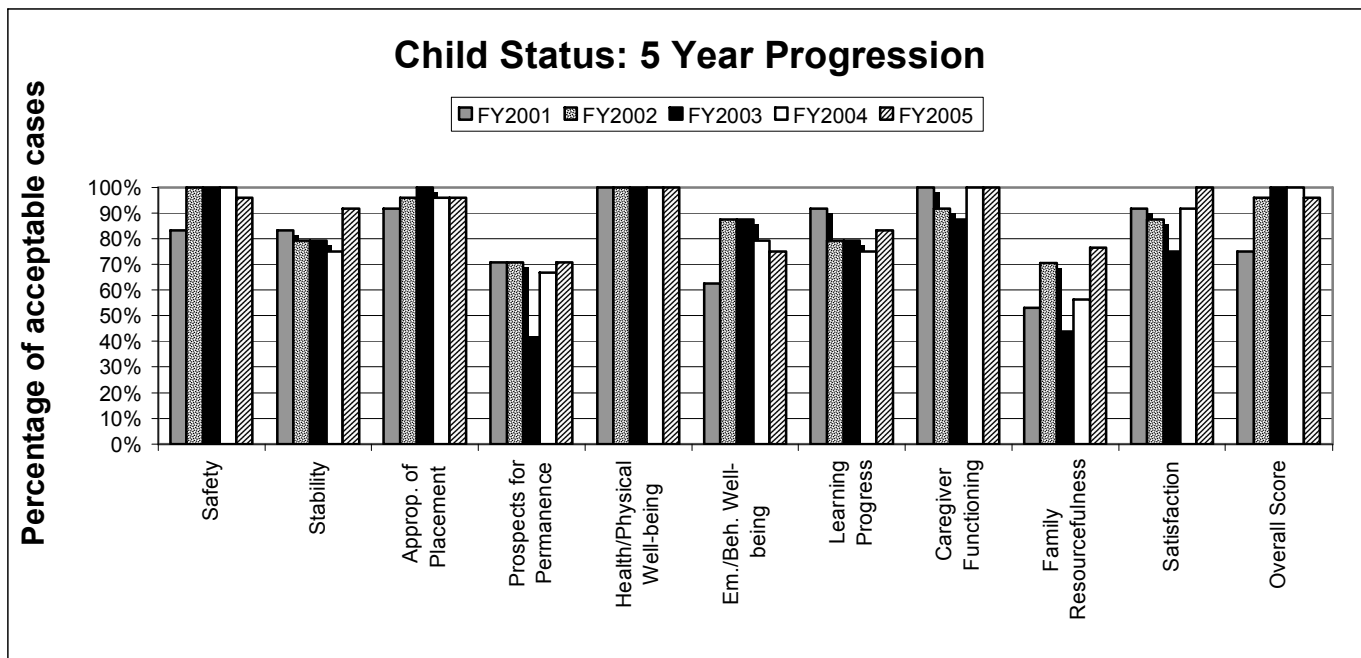
Preliminary data

The results in the following tables are based on the scores provided to OSR by reviewers. They contain the scores of 24 cases. These results are preliminary only and are subject to change.

Northern Child Status										
		# of cases			FY00	FY01	FY02	FY03	FY04	FY05
	# of cases	Needing		Baseline						Current
	Acceptable	Improvement	Exit Criteria 85% on overall score	Scores						Scores
Safety	23	1	95.8%	88.9%	83.3%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	95.8%
Stability	22	2	91.7%	77.8%	83.3%	79.2%	79.2%	75.0%	75.0%	91.7%
Approp. of Placement	23	1	95.8%	88.9%	91.7%	95.8%	100.0%	95.8%	95.8%	95.8%
Prospects for Permanence	17	7	70.8%	33.3%	70.8%	70.8%	41.7%	66.7%	66.7%	70.8%
Health/Physical Well-being	24	0	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
Em./Beh. Well-being	18	6	75.0%	77.8%	62.5%	87.5%	87.5%	79.2%	79.2%	75.0%
Learning Progress	20	4	83.3%	66.7%	91.7%	79.2%	79.2%	75.0%	75.0%	83.3%
Caregiver Functioning	13	0	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	91.7%	87.5%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
Family Resourcefulness	13	4	76.5%	42.9%	52.9%	70.6%	43.8%	56.3%	56.3%	76.5%
Satisfaction	24	0	100.0%	66.7%	91.7%	87.5%	75.0%	91.7%	91.7%	100.0%
Overall Score	23	1	95.8%	88.9%	75.0%	95.8%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	95.8%
			0% 20% 40% 60% 80% 100%							

- 1) This score reflects the percent of cases that had an overall acceptable Child Status score. It is not an average of FY05 current scores.

Note: These scores are preliminary and subject to change



Statistical Analysis of Child Status Results:

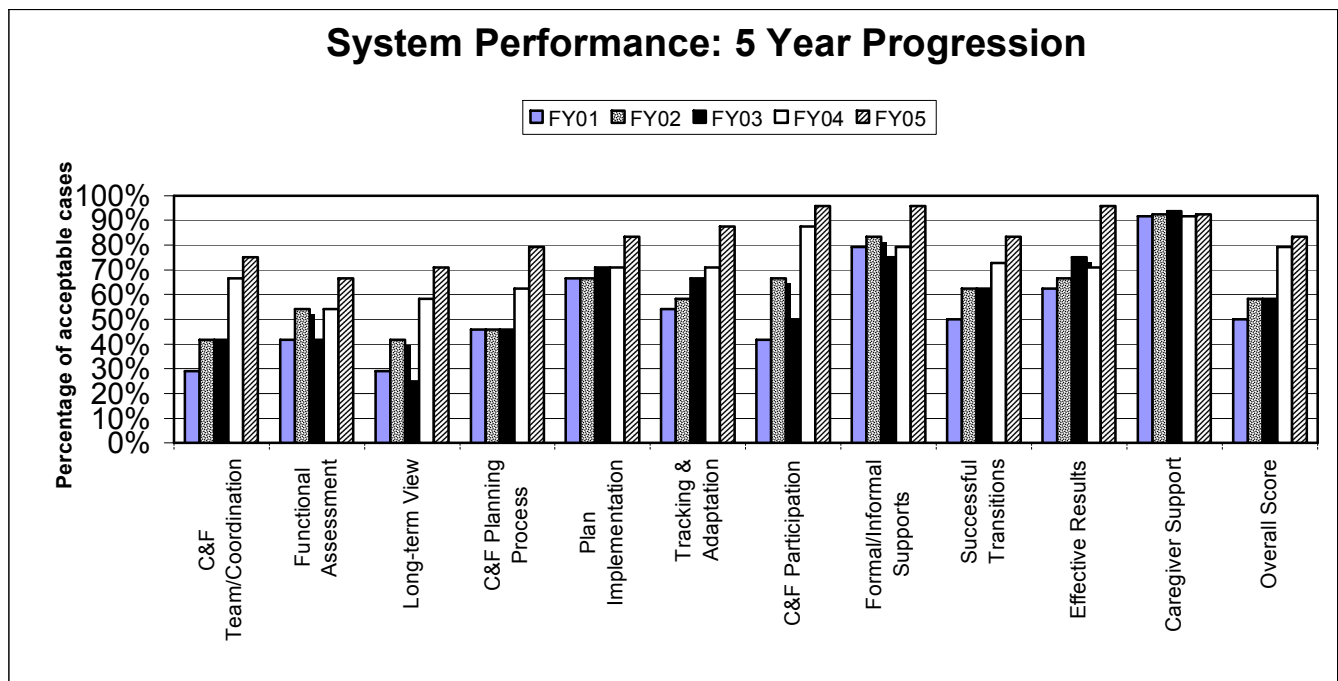
For the third year in a row the overall Child Status score was above 95%, with all but one case reaching an acceptable level. This exceeds the exit requirement of 85%. Northern Region has maintained exceptionally high scores on Child Status for the past four years. Health/Physical Well-being, Caregiver Functioning and Satisfaction also scored 100%.

Five of the Child Status indicators improved, two declined slightly, and three sustained the levels they had previously achieved. The greatest improvement on a Child Status indicator was the increase in Family Resourcefulness from 56% to 77%. A substantial improvement was also seen in Stability, which increased from 75% to 92%. Modest increases were seen in Prospects for Permanence (from 67% to 71%), Learning Progress (from 75% to 83%) and Satisfaction (from 92% to 100%).

Northern System Performance											
		# of cases				FY00	FY01	FY02	FY03	FY04	FY05
	# of cases	Needing	Exit Criteria	70% on Shaded indicators	Baseline						Current
	Acceptable	Improvement	Exit Criteria	85% on overall score	Scores						Scores
C&F Team/Coordination	18	6		75.0%	44.4%	29.2%	41.7%	41.7%	66.7%	75.0%	
Functional Assessment	16	8		66.7%	11.1%	41.7%	54.2%	41.7%	54.2%	66.7%	
Long-term View	17	7		70.8%	0.0%	29.2%	41.7%	25.0%	58.3%	70.8%	
C&F Planning Process	19	5		79.2%	11.1%	45.8%	45.8%	45.8%	62.5%	79.2%	
Plan Implementation	20	4		83.3%	55.6%	66.7%	66.7%	70.8%	70.8%	83.3%	
Tracking & Adaptation	21	3		87.5%	55.6%	54.2%	58.3%	66.7%	70.8%	87.5%	
C&F Participation	23	1		95.8%	25.0%	41.7%	66.7%	50.0%	87.5%	95.8%	
Formal/Informal Supports	23	1		95.8%	88.9%	79.2%	83.3%	75.0%	79.2%	95.8%	
Successful Transitions	20	4		83.3%	11.1%	50.0%	62.5%	62.5%	72.7%	83.3%	
Effective Results	23	1		95.8%	22.2%	62.5%	66.7%	75.0%	70.8%	95.8%	
Caregiver Support	12	1		92.3%	83.0%	91.7%	92.3%	93.8%	91.7%	92.3%	
Overall Score	20	4		83.3%	22.2%	50.0%	58.3%	58.3%	79.2%	83.3%	
					0% 20% 40% 60% 80% 100%						

1)

- 1) This score reflects the percent of cases that had an overall acceptable System Performance score. It is not an average of FY05 current scores.
Note: these scores are preliminary and subject to change



Statistical Analysis of System Performance Results:

After jumping from 58% to 79% last year, overall System Performance improved again this year to 83%.

Every System Performance indicator increased! There were substantial increases in Effective Results (from 71% to 96%), Formal/Informal Supports (from 79% to 96%), and Child and Family Planning Process (from 63% to 79%). There were also double-digit increases in Plan Implementation (from 71% to 83%), Tracking and Adaptation (from 71% to 88%), Functional Assessment (from 54% to 67%), Long-term View (from 58% to 71%) and Successful Transitions (from 73% to 83%). Modest increases were seen in Child and Family Team/Coordination (from 67% to 75%) and Child and Family Participation (from 88% to 96%).

Last year only two core indicators exceeded the exit criteria of 70% (Plan Implementation and Tracking and Adaptation). This year five of the six core indicators exceeded the exit criteria. The only indicator that did not do so was Functional Assessment, and it fell short by just one case.

Additional Analysis:

The analysis of individual indicator scores shows overall improvement in both Child Status and System Performance indicators.

- There were no indicators in either domain that scored a 1.
- Eighty-nine percent of the Child Status indicators (197 of a possible 222) received acceptable scores.
- The total number of System Performance indicators that scored acceptable jumped from 176 last year to 212 this year. This represents 84% of the indicators (212 of a possible 253).
- Last year there was a significant increase in the number of System Performance indicators that scored 5's (from 48 to 69) and 6's (from 3 to 7). These numbers showed further improvement this year as there were 93 System Performance indicators that scored 5's and 18 indicators that scored 6's.
- The number of 1's, 2's and 3's all decreased this year while the number of 4's, 5's and 6's all increased.

ANALYSIS OF DATA

RESULTS BY CASE TYPE AND PERMANENCY GOALS

There was a significant difference in the results when comparing foster care cases with home-based cases. Ten of the 13 foster care cases had acceptable overall System Performance (77%) while 10 of the 11 home-based cases were acceptable (91%). Last year in-home and out-of-home cases scored similarly to each other.

Of the four cases that were not acceptable on System Performance, three were foster care cases. The other case was a PSS case.

Case Type	# in sample	# Acceptable System Performance	% Acceptable System Performance
Foster Care	13	10	77%
Home-based	11	10	91%

All of the cases with Adoption, Guardianship-nonrelative, or Individualized Permanency goals had acceptable System Performance. The four cases that had unacceptable System Performance represented three different permanency goals. There were two Reunification cases, one Remain Home case, and one Guardianship-nonrelative case.

Goal	# in sample	# Acceptable System Performance	% Acceptable System Performance	Average Overall '04 System Perform. Score	Average Overall '05 System Perform. Score
Adoption	4	4	100%	4.5	4.8
Guardianship-relative	1	1	100%	NA	4.0
Guardianship-nonrelative	1	0	0%	NA	3.0
Individualized Permanency	4	4	100%	3.8	5.0
Remain Home	8	7	88%	3.9	4.5
Reunification	6	4	67%	4.3	4.2

RESULTS BY AGE OF TARGET CHILD

The comparison of the results for cases with older and younger children shows little difference on the Overall System Performance scores. Whereas 81% of the cases with a young child (0 to 12 years) had acceptable System Performance, 88% of the cases with a teenager were acceptable. This is the reverse of last year's outcome in which cases of young children performed better than cases of teenagers. Inasmuch as every case scored acceptably on Child Status, there was no difference in status outcomes based on age. Age does not appear to be a factor that affects performance.

	# of cases in sample	# of cases acceptable	% Acceptable
System Performance			
Cases with target child 0-12 years old	16	13	81%
Cases with target child 13+ years old	8	7	88%
Child Status			
Cases with target child 0-12 years old	16	16	100%
Cases with target child 13+ years old	8	8	100%

RESULTS BY CASEWORKER DEMOGRAPHICS

Although concerns about caseload size continue to come up in focus groups in the Northern Region, large caseloads had little impact on the review results. Last year's data showed more than half of the workers had large caseloads. This year only 29% of the workers in the sample had high caseloads. Based on the data gathered from the QCR reviews held this year in all regions, it appears that Northern Region has a higher percentage of workers with large caseloads than Eastern or Western region does, but about the same as percentage as Salt Lake and Southwest regions. The percentage of workers with high caseloads for each region was: Eastern-8%, Western-17%, Southwest-25%, Salt Lake-25%, and Northern-29%.

Caseload Size	# in sample	# Acceptable System Performance	% Acceptable System Performance
16 cases or less	17	14	82%
17 cases or more	7	6	88%

Last year there were four workers reviewed who had less than a year of work experience, and all of their cases passed. This year there were three new workers, and again all of their cases passed. Eighty-one percent of the experienced workers had cases that passed. When asked why they believe new caseworkers are out performing their more experienced coworkers, focus groups responded that it may be due to improvements in training and the overall quality of the Practice Model training they are receiving or it may be due to the fact that new workers have fewer cases, therefore they can spend more time on each case and be better prepared for a QCR review.

Length of Employment with the Division	# of cases in sample	# of cases acceptable	% Acceptable
System Performance			
# of workers with 1 year or less experience	3	3	100%
# of workers with 1+ years experience	21	17	81%

RESULTS BY OFFICES AND SUPERVISORS

The following table displays the overall results by office and supervisor. All of the cases from Office A, Office B, and Office D had acceptable System Performance. The other two offices each had two cases that did not have acceptable System Performance. Eleven of 13 cases from Office E had acceptable System Performance. That was identical to last year's outcome for Office E. Office C improved their performance. Whereas only 40% of their cases had acceptable System Performance last year, this year they increased to 67% (4 out of 6 cases).

Case #	Office	Child Status	System Performance	Sys. Perf. By Office	System Perf by Supervisor		
05N06	A	Acceptable	Acceptable	100%	A	Acceptable	100%
05N05	B	Acceptable	Acceptable	2 of 2	B	Acceptable	2 of 2
05N17	B	Acceptable	Acceptable	100%	B	Acceptable	100%
05N14	C	Acceptable	Acceptable	4 of 6	C	Acceptable	2 of 3
05N16	C	Acceptable	Unacceptable	67%	C	Unacceptable	
05N21	C	Acceptable	Acceptable		C	Acceptable	67%
05N04	C	Acceptable	Acceptable		D	Acceptable	2 of 2
05N09	C	Acceptable	Acceptable		D	Acceptable	100%
05N08	C	Acceptable	Unacceptable		E	Unacceptable	100%
05N10	D	Acceptable	Acceptable	2 of 2	F	Acceptable	2 of 2
05N24	D	Acceptable	Acceptable	100%	F	Acceptable	100%
05N11	E	Acceptable	Unacceptable	11 of 13	G	Unacceptable	2 of 3
05N12	E	Acceptable	Acceptable	85%	G	Acceptable	
05N19	E	Acceptable	Acceptable		G	Acceptable	67%
05N02	E	Acceptable	Acceptable		H	Acceptable	5 of 6
05N03	E	Acceptable	Acceptable		H	Acceptable	83%
05N07	E	Acceptable	Unacceptable		H	Unacceptable	
05N13	E	Acceptable	Acceptable		H	Acceptable	
05N18	E	Acceptable	Acceptable		H	Acceptable	
05N23	E	Acceptable	Acceptable		H	Acceptable	
05N15	E	Acceptable	Acceptable		I	Acceptable	100%
05N01	E	Acceptable	Acceptable		J	Acceptable	2 of 2
05N20	E	Acceptable	Acceptable		J	Acceptable	100%
05N22	E	Acceptable	Acceptable		K	Acceptable	100%

Qualitative Case Review - Northern Region

April 2005

Exit Conference

STRENGTHS:

- Child and Family Team Meetings often happen early in the case, are held frequently, usually have the right people there, are purposeful, and include extended family and informal supports. Team members have a common understanding and direction.
- There was a good mix of informal and formal supports.
- There was a strong commitment by the entire team, including the judge, to insure the placement endured and provided permanence.
- The interaction of tracking, adaptation and assessment led to success.
- There was good evaluation of the viability of a kinship placement.
- Cultural responsiveness was shown by having bilingual team members throughout the team and respecting cultural values regarding the interaction of the family.
- Strength-based casework and a change in workers helped turn around the outcomes for a family.
- Coordination and collaboration of allied agencies supported the independent living goal.
- There was an excellent transition of a child from one home to another.
- There was good work with families where addiction was the primary cause for interaction with the Division and Drug Court helped the teaming be stronger and more effective.
- Building on the strengths of a mother empowered her and built on what she had already built.
- Accurately assessing a strength in an adolescent allowed the adolescent to have choices.
- Recognizing the difference between attachment disorder and oppositional defiant disorder broke a pattern of disruption.
- A worker had clearly identified underlying needs and they were clearly identified in the assessment.
- Families are engaged and have a trusting relationship with the department.
- Visitation was purposeful. Visitation varies in intensity based on the needs of the case.

- There was measured risk-taking and other partners were allowed to have some decision making opportunities.
- Rather than immediately removing the child, problems were immediately addressed, tracking and monitoring were intensified, and a good safety plan was developed.
- Cases are Individualized and differences are recognized.
- Strong partnership and support and strong relationships allowed a mother to make great improvements.
- There was outstanding support from the school for special needs of the child.
- Teen moms were choosing the direction of their cases, within boundaries. They were choosing service providers and how they would complete their schooling.
- Long and short-term personal and case goals were identified, well-known and shared by the team.
- Foster parents are committed to the children for the long-term. Foster children were allowed to have choices and determine their own consequences.

PRACTICE IMPROVEMENT OPPORTUNITIES:

- **Functional Assessment:**
 1. Underlying needs were identified but not carried over into the plan. This affected the outcomes and long-term view.
 2. Underlying needs were not understood by all workers and documented. Team meeting notes often contain more assessment information than the Functional Assessment.
 3. Educational needs were not assessed.
 4. The written Functional Assessment is more of a history than an assessment.
 5. The Functional Assessment had a narrow focus on just one problem; it was missing the big picture.
- **Long term view**
 1. There was confusion between the permanency goal and the long-term view. The LTV goes beyond attainment of the permanency goal.
 2. When a case is not progressing, bring in “fresh eyes” with a strength-based approach.
- **Teaming**
 1. If the teaming had started earlier, outcomes could have been improved.
 2. Educational partners were not Included.
- **Timeliness:**
 1. Information gathered early didn’t get translated into services in a timely way.

SYSTEM BARRIERS:

- There is a need to improve coordination and cooperation between therapists who work with different providers and also between employed versus contracted therapists.
- A law causes children to be convicted of a felony although the allegation was unsupported in the CPS investigation.
- Children lose services for special needs if they are adopted.
- Parents lack legal representation and need education on the legal process.
- There is resistance from some school personnel in Ogden to engaging in the team.
- Punitive measures are implemented when a child voluntarily returns from running away.
- There is a lack of services, especially mental health services, due to changes in Medicaid.

RECOMMENDATIONS FROM STAFF AND REGION:

1. Identify the needs at the beginning of the case, assure they flow into the plan, and amend the plan as the needs change.
2. Look at how the new law affects the ability to address needs that are not addressed in court.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- Once the Long-term View statement is confirmed with the team, the next step is to be sure it is understood by the entire team and incorporated into the service plan.